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ABSTRACT

This teacher's guide explores Fort McHenry and the British attack on Baltimore Harbor (Maryland) in 1814. The guide contains 11 lessons: (1) "Where in the World Is Baltimore?" (no handout-use classroom resources); (2) "Why Baltimore?" (Handout-Why Baltimore?); (3) "Now Where Do We Place the Fort?" (Handout-Map of Patapsco River/Baltimore Harbor); (4) "The Star Fort" (Handout-Diagram of Fort McHenry; Handout-The Star Fort); (5) "Defenders of Fort McHenry" (Handout-The Defenders); (6) "An African American Soldier Defends Fort McHenry" (Handout-A Black Soldier Defends Fort McHenry); (7) "Fort McHenry Measurements Today" (Handout-Fort McHenry Today: Wall Measurements); (8) "The Great Garrison Flag" (Handout-Great Garrison Flag); (9) "Francis Scott Key" (Handout-Francis Scott Key); (10) "The Star-Spangled Banner" (Handout-"Star-Spangled Banner"); and (11) "History of Fort McHenry" (Handout-History of Fort McHenry). An extensive bibliography contains references about the flag, Francis Scott Key, and the War of 1812. A teacher's guide evaluation sheet also is attached. (BT)

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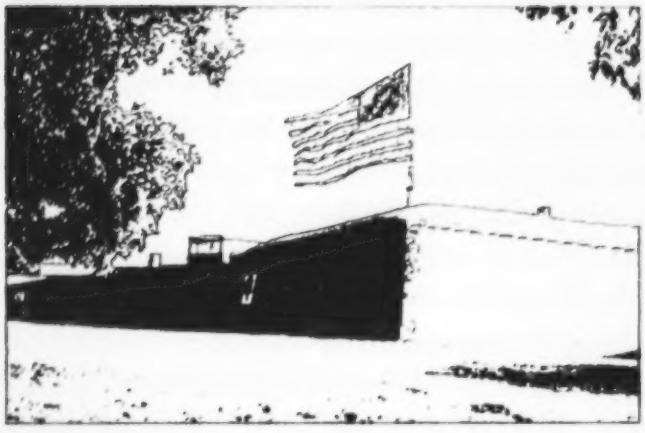
Fort McHenry National Monument & Historic Shrine

Teacher's Guide



Author: Jim Rogers

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Fort McHenry National Monument & Historic Shrine
Baltimore, Maryland 21230-5393

Dear Teacher:

Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine is pleased to offer this Teacher's Guide as an assist in planning your lessons. Included are eleven lesson plans and a bibliography.

The Teacher's Guide was made possible through a grant from the National Park Foundation - Parks as Classrooms. Mr. Robert Ross, Curriculum Coordinator, Francis Scott Key Elementary/Middle School, Baltimore City Public Schools, developed these lesson plans for use in grades 5-8.

The lessons explore various aspects of Fort McHenry and the British attack on Baltimore in 1814. Reproducible information sheets are included for handout to students.

Please use the lesson plans in your classroom. Your comments will be appreciated.

Thank you for your interest and support of the park.

Sincerely,

Superintendent
Fort McHenry NM&HS

Write: Superintendent, Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine, End of East Fort Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland 21230-5393; Phone: (410) 962-4290.

Fort McHenry National Monument & Historic Shrine

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Lesson 1:
Where in the World is Baltimore?

OBJECTIVES:

The students will:

1. locate Baltimore in relation to the sailing trade routes of Great Britain.

2. explain the importance of Baltimore's location to privateers during the War of 1812.

MATERIALS: Map of the Atlantic Ocean region, map of Baltimore's harbor and other classroom resources.

ACTIVITIES:

1. Divide the students into cooperative groups and distribute a map of the Atlantic Ocean region. Use classroom resources, such as maps, atlases and globes, to assist the group in locating and labeling on their desk map the following sites:

Atlantic Ocean	Caribbean Sea
Chesapeake Bay	Baltimore
Great Britain	Gulf Stream

   Have the students decide the route that sailing ships would have taken to get from the Caribbean Sea to Great Britain. Be sure that the students are aware of the role of prevailing winds and ocean currents that were important in propelling sailing ships across the Atlantic Ocean. Use a marker or crayon to mark this route on the maps.

2. Ask the students to imagine that they are sailing ship captains from Baltimore. Have them list the reasons why Baltimore was a good location for privateers. Encourage the students to use their maps as the basis for their ideas. Ask the students to create a skit in which they attempt to convince Baltimore businessmen to put up money to outfit a privateer. Remind the students that privateers were licensed pirate vessels that could sell their prizes (the ships and cargoes of enemy merchant vessels captured).

Lesson 2:
Why Baltimore?

OBJECTIVES:

The students will:

1. identify the reasons why the United States and Great Britain went to war in 1812.

2. explain why the British wanted to attack and destroy Baltimore.

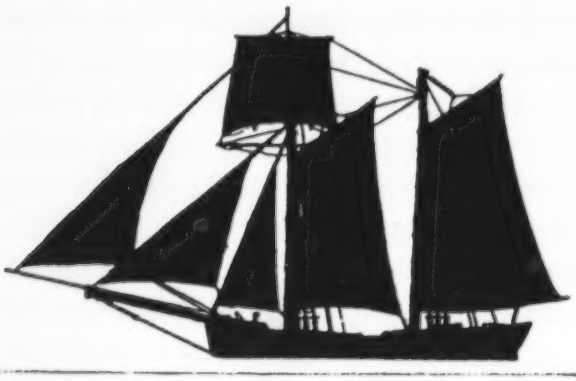
MATERIALS: "Why Baltimore?" handout

ACTIVITIES:

1. Divide the class into cooperative groups and distribute the "Why Baltimore?" handout. Ask the students to generate a list of words that describe what Baltimore was like in the early 1800's. From this list, have the students decide if Baltimore was an important and valuable city for people who wanted to trade with other parts of the world. Have the groups create a chart with one part showing the reasons the United States was angry with Great Britain and the other part showing the reasons why Great Britain was angry with the United States. Using this chart for ideas, have the group pretend that they are speech writers for President Madison. They should write a speech to be delivered to Congress asking for a declaration of war on Great Britain. The chart will be used to provide evidence supporting this request.

2. Have the students explain how Baltimore came to be known as a "Nest of Pirates." Ask the students to pretend that they are British merchants. Have them write a letter to Parliament asking for help in stopping Baltimore privateers from attacking their vessels. The students should recall and use information gained in the previous lesson as they write their letters. Have the students read the letters to the class which will play the role of Parliament. Allow a debate and vote to determine the letter's effectiveness.

Handout: Why Baltimore?



In the early 1800's, Baltimore was a fast growing harbor city. The population was close to 50,000. Many of the men worked in the city at skilled jobs such as sailmakers, ironworkers, shipwrights and merchants. Successful shipbuilding and the city's central location for trade helped to make Baltimore an important international seaport.

Meanwhile, France and Great Britain, at war with one another, had set up economic blockades to keep each other from getting important supplies. As a neutral carrier for both countries, America's merchant ships sometimes were caught in the blockades, and all of the goods would be confiscated by one or the other of the two countries. In addition, the British frequently captured American seaman and forced them to serve in the Royal Navy. Also, the Americans thought the British were encouraging the Indians in the West to attack frontier settlements. Shortly, the Americans became so angry with the way they were being treated that the United States declared war on Great Britain in June 1812 to protect "free trade and sailor's rights," and American rights on land.

When news of the Declaration of War reached Baltimore, some shipowners began turning their vessels into privateers. these privately owned ships were given permission from the government to capture British merchant ships. Soon, Baltimore was described as "a nest of pirates," and the British were determined to put an end to privateering.

Expecting a British attack, the people of Baltimore strengthened the city's defenses at Fort McHenry.

Lesson 3:
Now Where Do We Place the Fort?

OBJECTIVES:

The students will:

1. determine the best location for a fort to defend Baltimore's harbor from attack.

2. defend their choice by using evidence they determine from their research.

MATERIALS: Map of the Patapsco River

ACTIVITIES:

1. Divide the students into cooperative groups and distribute the map of the Patapsco River. Using what the students learned from the previous lesson, have them brainstorm reasons why the people of Baltimore wanted to build a fort. Ask the students to pretend that they are members of a search committee charged with finding the best location for a fort to defend Baltimore. The group will determine the location which meets the following requirements:

    1. may be supplied by land,
    2. may prevent ships from getting close to any part of Baltimore's harbor,
    3. and may spot enemy ships approaching Baltimore from any direction.

    Have the students place a star on the spot selected.

2. The groups will each present their choice to the entire class, along with reasons supporting their decisions. Bring the class to a consensus regarding the best site for a fort. Show the students the actual location of Fort McHenry. Compare and discuss the class choice with that of Baltimore's actual site selection committee.

Handout: Map of the Patapsco River

Lesson 4:
The Star Fort

OBJECTIVES:

The students will:

1. describe the shape of Fort McHenry and determine at least two reasons why this shape was used.

2. interpret a map of Fort McHenry to determine what designs were incorporated into providing defense of the fort.

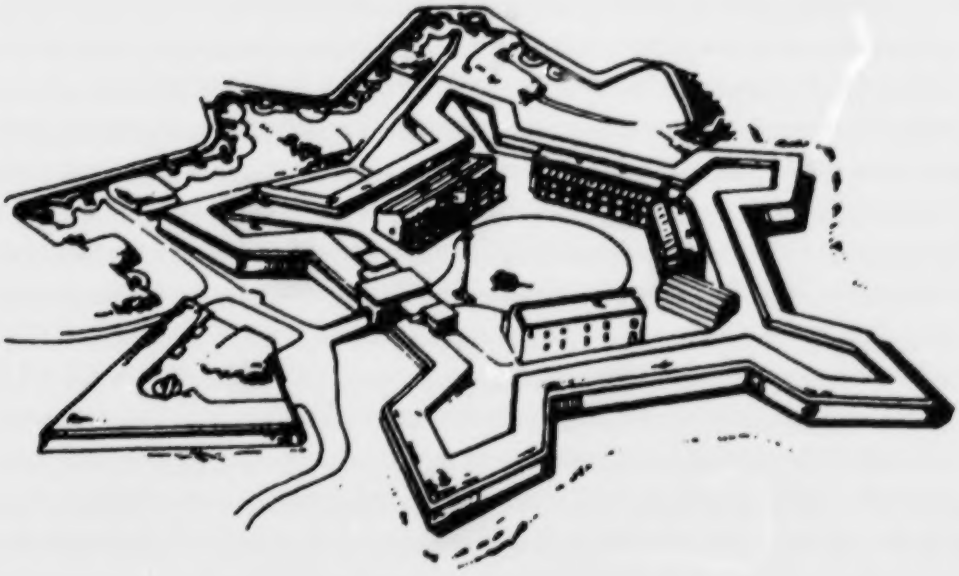
MATERIALS: "The Star Fort" handout and the "Diagram of Fort McHenry"

ACTIVITIES:

1. Divide the students into cooperative groups and distribute the "The Star Fort" handout. Have the students make a list of the buildings mentioned in the reading. Ask them to write a short description of how each building was used. Have the students draw a five-pointed, star shape. Ask them to use the descriptions to place symbols showing where they think each building was located.

2. Distribute the "Diagram of Fort McHenry" to the groups and ask the students to compare the diagram of the fort to their drawings. Make a list of any differences between the two drawings. How did the groups do? Have them explain why they did or did not do well in locating the buildings.

Handout: The Star Fort



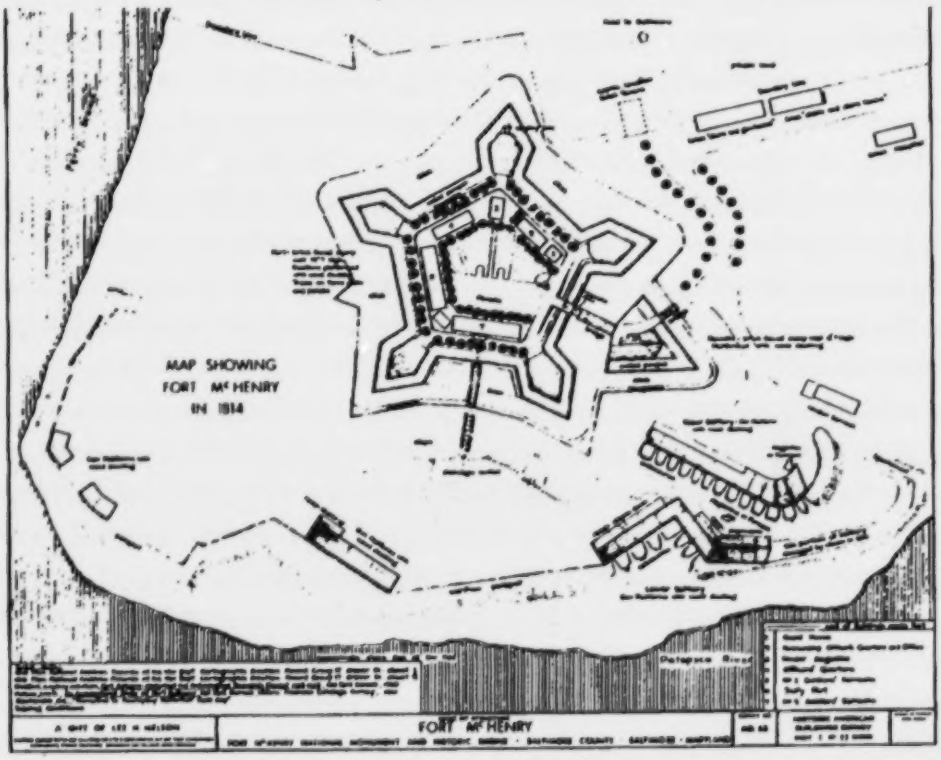
Fort McHenry was constructed between 1799 and 1802. It was in the shape of a five-pointed star which was a popular design during the period. Each point of the star was visible from the point on either side; and every area of land surrounding the fort could be covered with as few as five men.

The wall of Fort McHenry and the buildings within were constructed of brick. There were four barracks to house the garrison consisting of the Commanding Officer's Quarters, Junior Officers' Quarters and two buildings for the enlisted men. A guardhouse stood next to the Commanding Officer's Quarters. Here, soldiers of the Fort McHenry Guard lived and worked; sometimes unruly soldiers were confined in the guardrooms. The Powder Magazine, where the gunpowder was stored, stood between the Commanding Officer's Quarters and the Junior Officers' Quarters. The magazine was of solid enough construction to protect the gunpowder from sparks, fire and explosion.

During the 1830's, major improvements were made to the fort. Second stories were added to the barracks and two new guardhouses were built on each side of the Sally Port to replace the two earlier ones.

While you are visiting the fort, try to imagine how it looked during its early years.

Handout: Diagram of Fort McHenry



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Lesson 5:
Defenders of Fort McHenry

OBJECTIVE:

The students will distinguish between the three groups of defenders of Fort McHenry.

MATERIALS: "The Defenders" handout

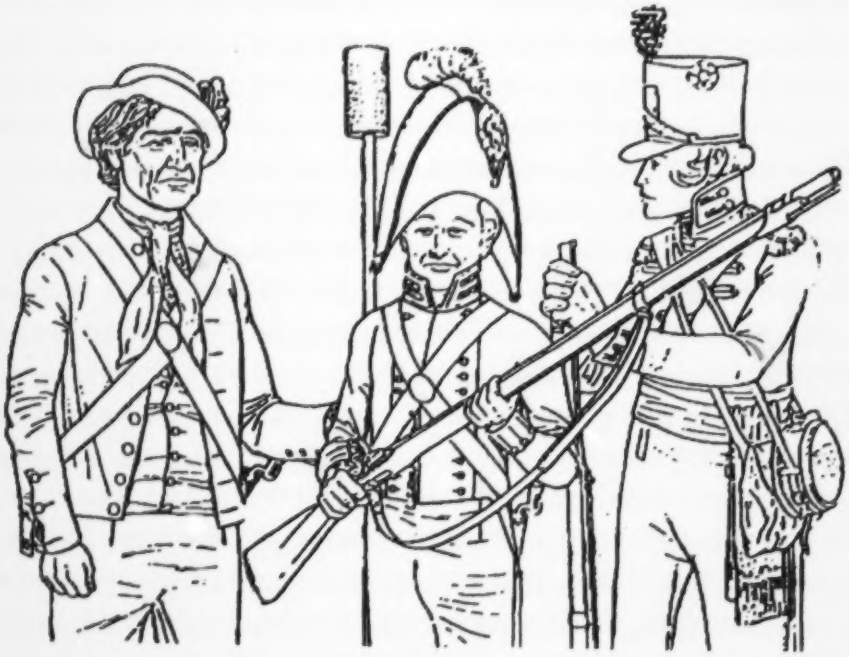
ACTIVITIES:

1. Distribute the "The Defenders" handout to the students. Have the students read the handout to compare and contrast the three groups of defenders. They can use a Venn diagram or any other graphic organizer to illustrate the differences and similarities among the defenders.

2. Have the students color in the three drawings on the handout. They should label the drawings with the name of the group they think each drawing represents. Have the students explain why they think their ideas on the identity of the defenders are correct.

3. Ask the students to select a defender type with whom they think they would most like to have been associated. The students should share their ideas with the entire class by explaining why they selected the group to which they wish to belong.

Handout: The Defenders



The 1,000 men who defended Fort McHenry during the Battle of Baltimore were members of three fighting units. The first group were members of the U.S. Army "Corps of Artillery." These men lived at Fort McHenry and were paid eight dollars a month for their services. The "Corps of Artillery" uniform consisted of a dark blue jacket called a "coatee." It had a high red collar trimmed with yellow and a single row of brass buttons down the front. In addition, the men were given a linen shirt, one pair of white summer trousers and one pair of blue wool trousers. A stiff felt hat, called a "shako," protected the soldier's head, much as a helmet would.

Another group of defenders was the "Maryland Militia," private citizens who felt it necessary to aid in the defense of the city. Militiamen were volunteers who were not paid until April 1813, when the militia was federalized for 30 days and released. From early August through September 20, 1814, the militia was given rations. These men came from all walks of life - bakers, tailors, shipbuilders, merchants, bankers and lawyers. The uniform was a blue wool jacket with a red collar and cuffs, a white linen shirt and white trousers. Militiamen wore large, black felt hats, trimmed in yellow and adorned with a large red feather.

The third group were sailors from Commodore Joshua Barney's Flotilla, which had been formed in 1813 to provide naval protection for the Chesapeake Bay. Sailors did not have a regular uniform. Sometimes the ship's captain would decide what the crew would wear.

It is likely, however, that many sailors wore blue wool jackets and vests. Their trousers, usually white, but sometimes blue striped, may have been made from linen or heavy canvas. Sailors wore hats that had been waterproofed with "tar" to protect the hat while at sea.

In spite of their different uniforms, the three groups of men had one thing in common – the protection of Baltimore from destruction. The bravery of these men and their skill in operating the cannons helped defend Baltimore. Cannon firing was a difficult and dangerous job. Artillery soldiers drilled long and hard, until they could load and fire the guns four times in one minute. There was always the possibility that a cannon might explode, killing the crew members. Often, men lost their hearing from the frequent, loud cannon blasts.

Lesson 6:
An African American Soldier Defends Fort McHenry

OBJECTIVE:

The students will detail the events in the life of William Williams.

MATERIALS: "A Black Soldier Defends Fort McHenry" handout

ACTIVITIES:

1. Distribute the "A Black Soldier Defends Fort McHenry" handout. After reading the handout, ask the students to decide why William Williams wanted to join the army.

2. Ask the students to explain what happened to Williams during the attack on Fort McHenry.

3. The students should write a poem, song, rap, create a picture or make a plaque that honors the actions of Private Williams. Share these with the entire class. Bring or send examples to Fort McHenry and share them with the Rangers.

Handout: A Black Soldier Defends Fort McHenry

No. 203 William Williams

This name is listed with the names of other recruits on the muster roll of the 38th U.S. Infantry. It seems like any other name and should not warrant a second glance, but this recruit is different. Williams was a 21 year old black runaway slave laborer.

Williams was a native Marylander slave. He had run away from his owner Benjamin Oden in the spring of 1814.

Williams was enlisted as a private in the U.S. Army and was assigned to the 38th U,S. Infantry Regiment. Federal law at the time prohibited the enlistment of slaves into the army because they "could make no valid contract with the government."

The officer who enlisted Williams did not question him. A reward notice posted at the time , by his owner, described Williams as "a bright mulatto....and so fair as to show freckles." Nevertheless, Williams received his enlistment bounty of $50 and was paid a private's wage of $8 per month.

In early September 1814, the 38th U.S. Infantry was ordered to march to Fort McHenry. During the bombardment , Williams was severely wounded, having his leg "blown off by a cannonball." He was taken to the Baltimore Hospital where he died two months later.

Williams was not the only black man to serve in the armed services at this time. There are numerous records of black sailors. George Roberts, a free black, served on the privateers Chasseur ("Pride of Baltimore") and Sarah Ann. Charles Ball was a seaman in Commodore

Joshua Barney's U.S. Chesapeake Flotilla who later published his memoirs in 1836. Gabriel Roulson was an Ordinary Seaman on the U.S. Sloop of War Ontario. Baltimore also had many skilled free blacks who, as naval mechanics, sailmakers, riggers, carpenters and ship caulkers, helped build naval ships and privateers that would bring war to the British merchant fleet and navy. Many of these men and slaves helped construct gun carriages and build defenses. Williams is unique because he served in the U.S. Army, a branch of the armed services that was almost exclusively white at the time.

All Americans can take pride in the contribution of Williams and other blacks whose names may be lost to history, who fought beside white defenders and helped save Baltimore during its time of crisis in 1814.

Lesson 7:
Fort McHenry Measurements Today

OBJECTIVES:

The students will:

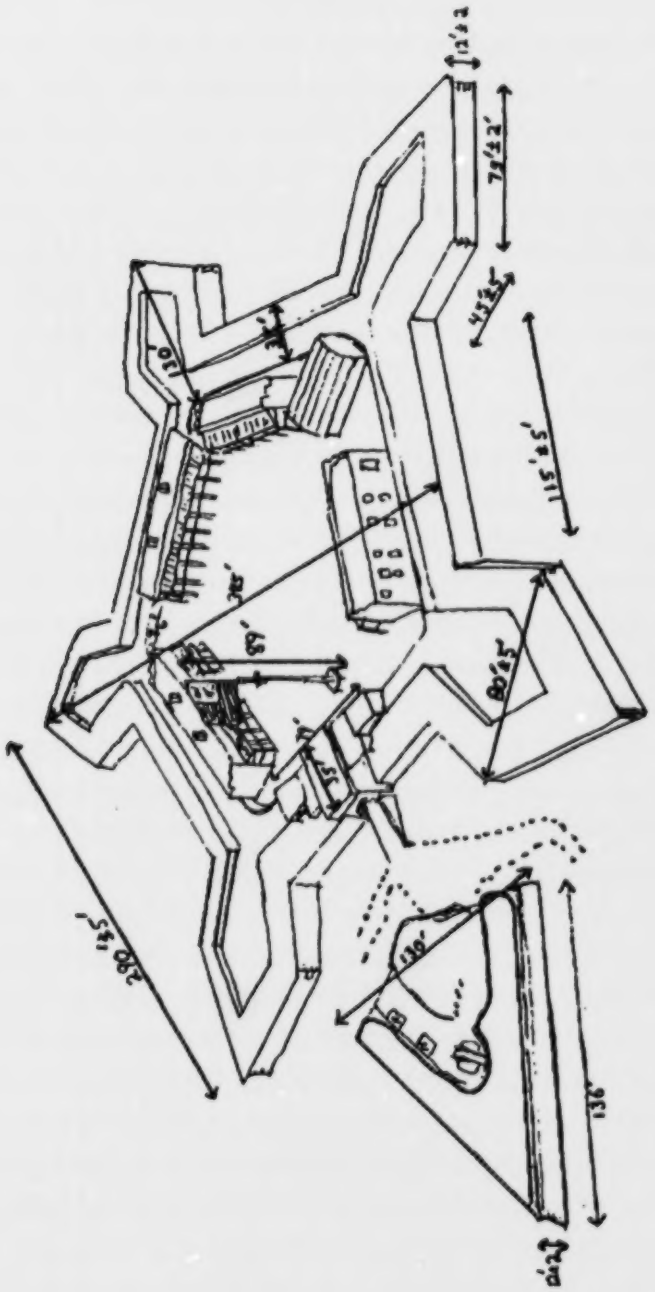
1. calculate the perimeter of the fort's walls.
2. calculate the area of the inside of the fort.
3. draw lines of fire for the fort's walls to illustrate how the shape of the fort aided in its defense.

MATERIALS: "Fort McHenry Today" handout

ACTIVITIES:

1. Divide the students into cooperative groups and distribute the "Fort McHenry Today" handout. Have the students determine the perimeter of the fort's walls. Remind them that all of the dimensions are on the drawing. They will have to be accurate in planning how to determine the number of walls and the matching length measurement.
2. Have the students use the inside measurements on the diagram to determine the area of the grounds. Ask the students to consider the following: If 1,000 soldiers were protecting the fort, did they have a lot of space to hide from British bombs and rockets? What was the true purpose of the fort?
3. Have the groups draw all the possible lines of fire from the fort. Do they now understand the popularity and effectiveness of the five-pointed, star fort design? If this design was so important in 1812, why was Fort McHenry obsolete by the end of the Civil War?

Handout: Fort McHenry Today



FORT MCHENRY TODAY

Wall Measurements

Lesson 8:
The Great Garrison Flag

OBJECTIVES:

The students will:

1. explain the reason the flag was so large.

2. demonstrate the size of the Great Garrison Flag.

MATERIALS: "Great Garrison Flag" handout

ACTIVITIES:

1. Divide the students into cooperative groups and distribute the "Great Garrison Flag" handout. Have each group read the handout to identify the following information:

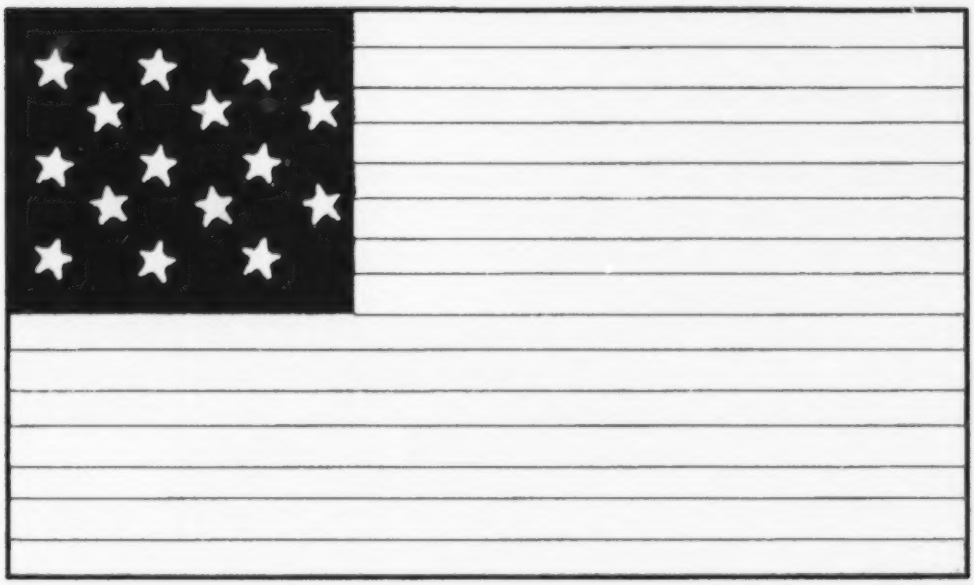
    1. dimensions of the Great Garrison Flag.
    2. dimensions of the storm flag.
    3. size of a single star on the flag.
    4. size of a single stripe on the flag.
    5. number of stars on the flag.
    6. number of stripes on the flag.
    7. the person who wanted to fly such a huge flag.
    8. why the flag was made so large.
    9. the person who made the flag.
    10. the people who ordered the flag to be made.
    11. the person who wrote a poem after seeing the flag.
    12. where you can see the flag today.

2. Have the groups brainstorm ways to show the dimensions of the Great Garrison Flag. Have the groups decide which of the ideas is the most practical way of showing the size of the flag. Some ideas could be:

    1. standing around the perimeter of the flag's dimensions
    2. painting a copy of the flag on the school's playground.
    3. use string or rope to create the flag's outline.

    Take a picture of the class's idea for showing the size of the flag. Bring it to Fort McHenry and share it with the Rangers.

Handout: Great Garrison Flag



During the War of 1812, the people of Baltimore were certain that the British would attack the city. Not knowing for sure when an attack would occur, they spent months preparing for it. Everything was made ready at Fort McHenry to defend Baltimore. But, there was no suitable flag to fly over the Star Fort. Major George Armistead, the commanding officer, desired "to have a flag so large that the British will have no difficulty in seeing it from a distance."

Major Armistead got his wish when General John S. Stricker and Commodore Joshua Barney ordered two flags, especially made for the garrison, from Mary Pickersgill, a well-known flagmaker in Baltimore. She worked relentlessly on the heavy, woolen flags, one of which was to be the largest battle flag ever flown. It measured 30 feet wide by 42 feet long. The other flag, called a "storm flag," measured 17 feet by 25 feet.

The larger of the two flags had stripes two feet wide and stars 24 inches from point to point. At that time, it was the practice to add one star and one stripe for each new state joining the Union. In 1814, the official United States flag had 15 stars and 15 stripes.

The 30' X 42' flag was the one that Francis Scott Key saw on the morning of September 14, 1814. It inspired him to write the words to "The Star-Spangled Banner." Today, this flag is displayed in the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History, Washington, D.C.

Lesson 9:
Francis Scott Key

OBJECTIVES:

The students will:

1. create a timeline summarizing the life of Francis Scott Key.

2. write a newspaper interview or article describing the events that led to the writing of "The Star-Spangled Banner."

MATERIALS: "Francis Scott Key" handout

ACTIVITIES:

1. Distribute the "Francis Scott Key" handout to the students. Have the students create a timeline showing the stated and implied dates and events of Key's life.

2. Using the information from the timeline and the handout, have the students imagine that they are newspaper reporters in 1814. They are to conduct an interview, complete with questions and answers, with Key. The interview should provide information regarding how Key came to be involved in the attack of Fort McHenry and why he was moved to write the poem that became the "The Star-Spangled Banner."

   Ask the students to use their interviews to write a newspaper article that details the events that were covered in the interview. Be sure to review the five W's with the class. They should be able to include them in their newspaper articles.

Handout: Francis Scott Key

Francis Scott Key was born on August 1, 1779, in western Maryland. His family was very wealthy and owned an estate called "Terra Rubra."

When Francis was 10 years old, his parents sent him to grammar school in Annapolis. After graduating at the age of 17, he began to study law in Annapolis while working with his uncle's law firm. By 1805, he had a well-established law practice of his own in Georgetown, a suburb of Washington, D.C. By 1814, he had appeared many times before the Supreme Court and had been appointed the United States District Attorney.

Francis Scott Key was a deeply religious man. At one time in his life, he almost gave up his law practice to enter the ministry. Instead, he resolved to become involved in the Episcopal Church. Because of his religious beliefs, Key was strongly opposed to the War of 1812. However, due to his deep love for his country, he did serve for a brief time in the Georgetown field artillery in 1813.

During the War of 1812, Dr. William Beanes, a close friend of Key's was taken prisoner by the British. Since Key was a well-known lawyer, he was asked to assist in efforts to get Dr. Beanes released. Knowing that the British were in the Chesapeake Bay, Key left for Baltimore. There Key met with Colonel John Skinner, a government agent who arranged for prisoner exchanges. Together, they set out on a small boat to meet the Royal Navy

On board the British flagship, the officers were very kind to Key and Skinner. They agreed to release Dr. Beanes. However, the three men were not permitted to return to Baltimore until after the bombardment of Fort McHenry. The three Americans were placed aboard the American ship and waited behind the British fleet. From a distance of approximately eight miles, Key and his friends watched the British bombard Fort McHenry.

After 25 hours of continuous bombing, the British decided to leave since they were unable to destroy the fort as they had hoped. Realizing that the British had ceased the attack, Key looked toward the fort to see if the flag was still there. To his relief, the flag was still flying! Quickly, he wrote down the words to a poem which was soon handed out as a handbill under the title "Defence of Fort McHenry." It was renamed "The Star-Spangled Banner" by an adoring public. It became a popular patriotic song. It was not until 1931, however, that it became our national anthem.

After the war, Francis Scott Key continued to live a very religious life. He was well-liked by his friends and was active in society. On January 11, 1843, while visiting his daughter in Baltimore, Key died of pleurisy. To honor the author of "The Star-Spangled Banner," there are monuments at: Fort McHenry; on Eutaw Street in Baltimore; at Mt. Olivet Cemetery in Frederick, Maryland; and at the Presidio in San Francisco, California.

Lesson 10:
"The Star-Spangled Banner"

OBJECTIVES:

The students will:

1. interpret the figurative language of the first verse of "The Star-Spangled Banner" to create an illustration.

2. rewrite the first verse using their own words.

MATERIALS: "The Star-Spangled Banner" handout

ACTIVITIES:

1. Divide the students into cooperative groups and distribute the "The Star-Spangled Banner" handout. Ask the groups to read the first verse of the poem. Have the groups do a Think-Pair-Share activity to brainstorm ideas regarding what they think the words represent. Give the students an opportunity to present their illustrations to the entire class. They should also use the words of the first verse to explain the illustration.

2. Have the students use the first verse as the basis for a paragraph or short report on the attack on Fort McHenry. They can imagine that they are newspaper reporters who are interviewing Francis Scott Key, and the first verse is a description of what he saw happen during the attack on the fort. When the group reports to the entire class, the other groups should be checking to see that all the events described are mentioned in the group's report.

Handout: "The Star-Spangled Banner"

Francis Scott Key, a young poet-lawyer, witnessed the bombardment of Fort McHenry while under British guard on an American truce ship in the Patapsco River. Seeing his country's flag still flying over the Fort the next morning, he was moved to pen these immortal lines:

O say, can you see, by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming?
Whose broad stripes and bright stars, through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched, were so gallantly streaming!
And the rockets's red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there:
O say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

On the shore, dimly seen through the mists of the deep,
Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,
What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering steep,
As it fitfully blows, now conceals, now discloses?
Now it catches the gleam of the mornings' first beam,
In full glory reflected now shines on the stream:
'Tis the star-spangled banner! O long may it wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!

And where is that band who so vauntingly swore
That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion
A home and a country should leave us no more?
Their blood has washed out their foul footsteps pollution.
No refuge could save the hireling and slave
From the terror of flight, or the gloom of the grave:
And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!

O thus be it ever, when freemen shall stand
Between their loved homes and the war's desolation!
Blest with victory and peace, may the heaven-rescued land
Praise the Power that hath made and preserved us a nation
Then conquer we must when our cause it is just
And this be our motto: "In God is our trust."
And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!

Lesson 11:
The History of Fort McHenry

OBJECTIVES:

The students will:

1. create a timeline that provides a summary of the information found in the "The History of Fort McHenry" handout.

2. illustrate the timeline with drawings that correspond with the elements listed on the timeline.

MATERIALS: "History of Fort McHenry" handout

ACTIVITIES:

1. Distribute the "The History of Fort McHenry" handout and have the students read it to determine the dates and the events to be listed on the timeline. Have the students create a timeline with the correct dates and events paired.

2. Allow the students to draw and color pictures to illustrate their timelines. Each event should be illustrated. Be certain that the students make their timelines large enough to accommodate the illustrations. Timelines should be displayed and shared with the entire class.

Handout: History of Fort McHenry

3rd Artillery War of 1812

Civil War Artillery

Coast Artillery (early 1900's)

Medical Corps WWI

National Park Service

Insignia of Organizations Stationed at Fort McHenry During Its History

Fort McHenry's history began in 1776 during the Revolutionary War. The people of Baltimore feared an attack by the British and wanted to build a fort for protection. Anticipating an attack at any time, a fort of earthen mounds was constructed quickly. Originally, it was called Fort Whetstone, because of its location on Whetstone Point.

Whetstone Point was an excellent location for a fort for two reasons. It was located far enough from Baltimore to provide protection without endangering the city and the area was a peninsula - a body of land surrounded on three sides by water. Constructing the fort on this site meant that enemy ships, sailing into Baltimore, would have to pass the fort first.

The Revolutionary War ended without an attack on Baltimore, but improvements to the fort continued. In 1798, a French engineer was directed by the Secretary of War to draw plans for a new fort on Whetstone Point. These plans were expensive and it was difficult for the people of Baltimore to raise money for construction. However, James McHenry, a well-known politician, was instrumental in raising funds for the new fort. The fort was named "Fort McHenry" in his honor.

Fort McHenry became famous when the British tried to attack Baltimore during the War of 1812. When the bombardment began on September 13, 1814, there were 1,000 soldiers defending the fort. Some were federal soldiers who were stationed at Fort McHenry all the time. Many were volunteers from the city of Baltimore. Their commanding officer was Major George Armistead. For 25 hours, the British bombarded Fort McHenry, but the fort's artillery fire kept the British away. Baltimore was saved.

In the 1860's the United States was torn apart by the Civil War. Union troops were stationed at Fort McHenry to help keep Baltimore out of the hands of those who would have Maryland join the southern cause. The fort's guns were turned toward the city. Fort McHenry was used as a prison where political prisoners suspected of being Confederate sympathizers were held, often without trial. Many Confederate soldiers were imprisoned at the fort as well.

In 1917 during the first World War, General Hospital No. 2 was established at Fort McHenry by the War Department. It was the largest military hospital in the country with over 100 temporary buildings to accommodate wounded American soldiers returning from the war in Europe.

When the war ended, the need for the hospital slowly diminished and in 1925 the temporary buildings were torn down. Fort McHenry became a national park which today is administered by the National Park Service as the country's only National Monument and Historic Shrine. Exhibits around the fort will help you visualize life at Fort McHenry during the various stages of its history.

Fort McHenry National Monument & Historic Shrine

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Teacher's Guide Evaluation

To help us to evaluate this Teacher's Guide, we would appreciate your thoughts and comments.

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Address:
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1. Were the lesson plans useful in planning your class activities?

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